

**DOE News Release**  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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News media contacts:  
Brad Bugger (208) 526-0833  
Julie Ruggiero, (202) 586-4940

## **Department of Energy Designates the Idaho National Laboratory Advanced Test Reactor as a National Scientific User Facility**

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** - The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) today designated the Idaho National Laboratory's (INL) Advanced Test Reactor (ATR) as a National Scientific User Facility. Establishing the ATR as a National Scientific User Facility will help assert U.S. leadership in nuclear science and technology, and will attract new users – universities, laboratories and industry - to conduct research at the ATR. This facility will support basic and applied nuclear research and development (R&D), furthering President Bush's Advanced Energy Initiative, which will advance the nation's energy security needs.

"Clean, safe nuclear energy must be a key component of our nation's energy mix as our economy and demand for clean energy continues to grow," DOE Assistant Secretary of Nuclear Energy, Dennis Spurgeon said. "By encouraging research and development at DOE's Idaho facility, we are advancing our nation's scientific know-how - necessary to spur construction of the next generation of nuclear plants."

Designation of the ATR as a National Scientific User Facility can directly contribute to the development of improved products and processes, encourages innovative scientific research, and will increase U.S. scientific competitiveness. The ATR was originally built to improve nuclear reactor performance and to investigate problems with commercial reactors. As a National Scientific User Facility, the ATR offers unique domestic capabilities for nuclear fuel and reactor materials system development that industry, universities, and regulatory agencies will be able to utilize. The ATR is the only U.S. materials test reactor that can replicate multiple different reactor environments concurrently. Letters of support from universities, laboratories, industry, and other Federal programs provide strong evidence for the necessity of this program.

For more information on the President's Advanced Energy Initiative, visit: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2006/01/20060131-6.html>.

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